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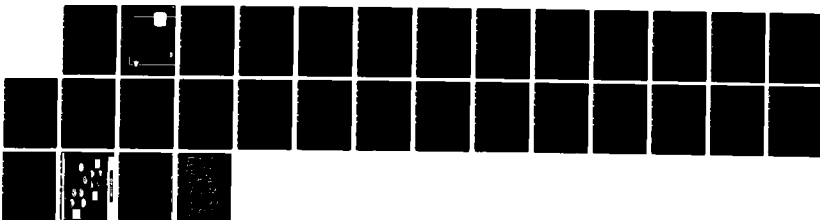
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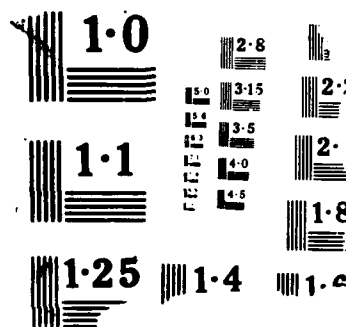
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STUDY PROJECT

STRATEGIC TARGET PLANNING AND THE JSTPS

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL JAMES T. PRATT III

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STRATEGIC TARGET PLANNING
AND THE JSTPS

An Individual Study Project
Intended for Publication

by

LTC James T. Pratt III

Professor Gary L. Guertner
Project Adviser

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U.S. Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
March 1988

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: James T. Pratt III, EN

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Deterrence of major war became a cornerstone of national policy in the years after World War II. By 1960, national leaders recognized the need for centralized control of the war planning that provided this deterrence. Establishment of the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff (JSTPS) was the result. The main product of this organization is the nation's principal war plan, the Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP), together with its target list, the National Strategic Target List (NSTL). Information was gathered using a review of current literature on strategic planning and current JSTPS manning documents. The history of the JSTPS, and its relationship to strategic planning is traced from its origin in 1960 through recent reorganizations.



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INTRODUCTION

The Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff (JSTPS) was created in 1960 to coordinate the planning of our nation's Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP). The organization, an arm of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), is located with the Strategic Air Command (SAC) Headquarters at Offutt Air Force Base, Omaha, Nebraska. Its evolution parallels that of U.S. strategic doctrine and supporting military strategy.

Deterrence of nuclear conflict has been a constant in American military doctrine, but military strategy has undergone considerable evolution. Massive retaliation in the Eisenhower Administration gave way to assured destruction under Kennedy and McNamara. These strategies were further refined, beginning in the early 1970's, and have resulted in greater flexibility, limited attack options, and efforts to control escalation if deterrence fails. Greater sophistication in strategy has created new problems and challenges for those responsible for the actual planning and targeting of U.S. strategic forces.

The means of delivering nuclear weapons has further complicated nuclear planning. These systems have grown from a few aircraft delivered warheads to the current triad of multiple weapons systems. Technological innovations, new threats, and, of course, the advent of the computer created the need for one central planning staff.

This paper will briefly describe the events and decisions which led the Eisenhower Administration to create the original JSTPS and formulate the first SIOP through the current JSTPS organization. It primarily focuses on the recent organizational and functional changes within the JSTPS, which occurred between 1985 and 1987. These events will give the reader a perspective not only on the JSTPS and its responsibilities, but also the constant stream of effort and activity required to maintain deterrence.

Use of the first Atomic bomb to end World War II presaged a new era. Military leaders soon realized that the new weapon required a new kind of planning and strategy. In 1946, the JCS began a series of broad based studies that are recognizable as the ancestral form of nuclear war planning done by the JSTPS. These studies were, in fact, called "War Plans" at the time and, before 1950, some of these had come to embody national policy objectives. Near the end of the Truman Administration, "The NSC made little effort to guide nuclear war planning, beyond the summary guidance provided in NSC-30."¹ NSC-30 provided only a diluted character of Truman's nuclear strategic policy and provided little guidance to planners as to when and how the bomb would be utilized. Further, "It is not clear whether Truman even fully grasped the fundamental dilemma posed by Soviet possession of nuclear weapons."² Before 1950, the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP) had emerged.

This eventually turned into the "guidance" which the JSTPS uses to plan the SIOP.

In March 1946, the Army Air Forces formed the Strategic Air Command, one year prior to the creation of a separate Air Force. SAC had the mission, under the authority of the JCS, of preparing and planning the conduct of global war, to include the use of atomic weapons. Because of both the scarcity and complexity of the atomic weapons at the time, the command's earliest plans dealt mainly with logistics. Before 1950, SAC, under the leadership of General Curtis Lemay, had seized the nuclear planning initiatives and had developed a workable Strategic War Plan which was approved by the JCS. By today's standards, it was an extremely simple plan including less than 100 targets and covered only a three-week execution period.

In the early 1950's other services began to develop a capability to employ nuclear weapons. Attack aircraft aboard the Navy's carriers in the Pacific and Mediterranean could deliver small nuclear weapons, while tactical air units then being deployed to Europe and the Far East had nuclear capability. The seeds for service rivalries were planted.

Before mid-decade planners were developing elaborate procedures for coordinating the use of a growing U.S. nuclear arsenal. Joint Coordination Centers were established in Europe and the Far East, but only for operational coordination after hostilities began. In the latter half of the decade, the Commands concerned held World Wide Coordination Conferences,

but despite the tremendous efforts, most of the conflicts and duplication of effort remained unresolved.

In 1957 the Army and Navy began to challenge SAC's dominance in nuclear war planning. The Army Chief of Staff and Chief of Naval Operations tasked their staffs to complete an analysis of nuclear related problems, such as radiation and fallout, if SAC's War Plans were implemented. The result of the study was the joint Army and Navy recommendation to the JCS that far more nuclear weapons were planned than were actually needed to accomplish the desired target damage. "Army and Navy desires to place limits on the proposed strategic nuclear offensive reflected in large measure a shared concern that U.S. defense required greatly improved capabilities for limited conflict."³ However, President Eisenhower continued to resist any changes to the established policy.

In the final years of the Eisenhower Administration, top level national leaders recognized the need for some kind of overall control mechanism for the U.S.'s growing strategic nuclear force. In his 1958 State of the Union Address, President Eisenhower stressed the need for "real unity in the defense establishment," with planning and control under a "unified direction." This resulted in the Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1958 which, among many provisions, increased the authority of the JCS. The Act took effect in 1959.

Other developments of the time which eventually had a bearing on the formation of the JSTPS were the advent of the

Navy's Polaris SLBM, definitely a strategic nuclear weapon system, and a joint service study of a target system for major war.

To cope with the need for unity of effort, the Air Force suggested the establishment of a completely new Unified Command to include the strategic forces of both the Navy and Air Forces. It was to be called the United States Strategic Command, or U.S. Stratcom, and would eventually replace SAC. The other services strenuously objected to this plan. By 1959 the Navy formally challenged SAC's dominant position and implied that "Polaris could and should eventually replace SAC." That same year JCS Chairman Twinig's proposed solution was "to establish a clear national targeting policy, presumably based on the forthcoming recommendations of the Hickey Committee Study, and then to prepare a national strategic target system and a single integrated operational plan."⁵

With the assent of President Eisenhower, Secretary of Defense Thomas S. Gates directed the formation of the JSTPS on 16 August 1960. Secretary of Defense Gates' decision to establish the JSTPS and the related SIOP resulted in a compromise solution. The idea of the first SIOP did not originate with Secretary Gates but with the Air Staff. While some Air Force officers too were worried about duplication of targeting in the war plans of the day, their main motivation in promoting the idea of the SIOP was to retain the prominent position of SAC. "By 1960 it was clear that Polaris could not be stopped.

The strategy behind SIOP was to co-opt the Polaris and take it out of the hands of the Navy and place it firmly under the wings of SAC."⁶ Since the SIOP would be compiled by the JSTPS, at SAC Headquarters, the position of SAC would still dominate nuclear planning and strategy.

The JSTPS mission, now as then, is to prepare and maintain on a day to day basis, the National Strategic Target List (NSTL) of targets selected for attack in the event of a nuclear war and a Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP) for the attack of these targets. In a larger sense, its mission is to provide deterrence of major war by carrying out its planning functions. In addition, the JSTPS has the task of preparing and maintaining the Nuclear Weapons Employment Policy (NUWEP), the Nuclear Reconnaissance List (NRL), and the Airborne SIOP Reconnaissance Plan (SRP) which consolidates the SIOP reconnaissance plans of appropriate, unified and specified commands and national agencies. The staff reports directly to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and is composed of officers and enlisted personnel of all the services.

National nuclear policy originates with the President. He passes broad guidance to the Secretary of Defense, who then issues his Nuclear Weapons Employment Plan (NUWEP). The NUWEP originated in 1973. The plan provides detailed targeting guidance to the JCS and a back channel, more general, explanation to the President. The actual NUWEP becomes the basis for Top Secret Decision Memorandums which are signed by the President.

The JCS uses the NUWEP as its guidance for Annex C to the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP). Annex C incorporates the NUWEP guidance and, in turn, becomes the JCS guidance for the targeting staff. The staff planners prepare the SIOP. The JSTPS plans all options of the SIOP in great detail.

"The essence of strategic targeting is designing a plan that assigns available weapons against targets to achieve the goals of military strategy. The ultimate plan, or SIOP, is developed by the JSTPS. The SIOP is developed by the JSTPS. The SIOP integrates and coordinates the elements of the TRIAD assigned to strike various aim-points in the target base. The system is based upon the Nuclear Weapons Employment Policy (NUWEP). The plan is based upon the current capabilities of all systems in the Triad and is the most important measure of the United States' ability to execute its strategic policy."⁷

Strategic target planning is the means by which our nations' nuclear strategy is implemented. Theoretically, the strategy should define the target system and determine the design of the weapons system. In reality, the target planners inherit existing systems within the Triad and build the initial target data base to coincide with systems capabilities. Strategic target planning, in this case, is the straight forward process of taking into account the technical considerations involved in assigning weapons systems against targets. Many shortcomings are reflected in matching the existing strategic arsenal against the enemy target system across a wide variety

of attack options. The shortcomings related to weapons limitations (e.g., yield, accuracy, etc.) can, hopefully, be rectified by new and improved weapons systems. Shortcomings based on target characteristics (e.g., time, sensitivity or mobility) are the most difficult to correct.

In the most ideal situation, as problems are identified, action can be taken to modify the target or the weapons system. Within this situation is a very real question as to what drives the NCA nuclear strategy (Figure 1).

Despite the NUWEP dictated by the NCA, it is not clear that strategy is the driving element. The President may desire certain targets to be included in the target data base, but if a weapon is technically unable to do the job, an alternate, and perhaps less desirable, target must be substituted. Often political and economic considerations become the driving force, specifically when aspects of broad national policy are operative. Economic considerations affect the weapons systems directly (e.g., can we afford to research and develop what we want?), whereas political considerations can influence target selection and weapons procurement.

Since the realist view, as shown in Figure 1, is often unclear, the JSTPS uses a narrower view focused on the quantitative aspects of strategic target planning. This method of planning became popular during Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara's regime. "The 1960's saw, for the first time, the domination of defense planning by civilian defense intellectuals who, by

and large, had a managerial of defense--analytical, rather than a strategic orientation."8

However, as the Vietnam War took the energies of the Secretary of Defense and the JCS in the late 1960's "there was only minimal guidance offered for the shaping of war plans which would provide for the flexibility in execution in support of particular war aims. In spite of this, the targeting professionals in Omaha continued to do their best to match available weapons to expanding target lists."9

In establishing the JSTPS, the Secretary of Defense directed that it be collocated with Headquarters SAC to take full advantage of existing war planning expertise and computerization. By the same directive, the officer who filled the position of commander and chief, SAC (CINCSAC), would be the Director of Strategic Target Planning while the Vice Director, who was to furnish day-to-day direction of the Staff, would always be a flag officer of a service other than the Air Force; in practice he has always been a U.S. Navy Vice Admiral.

To assure unity of effort, senior officer representatives from the unified and specified commands (Atlantic and Europe) are located with the JSTPS and participate in its work, representing their respective commanders-in-chief. The staff also has a special relationship with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), resulting from its council meeting in Ottawa, Canada, in 1963, as officers from NATO nations joined the staff of the SACEUR Representative to the JSTPS. There

are presently representatives from Italy, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the United Kingdom on the staff.

ORGANIZATION

The original decision to form the JSTPS was a compromise, away from the Air Force proposal and in the direction of Navy and Army positions. The JSTPS was only given the authority to plan, not execute, our strategic nuclear forces. Only the National Command Authority can execute the SIOP.

When organized in 1960, the JSTPS was divided into two major divisions, reflective of its major products--the National Strategic Target List Division (JL) and the Single Integrated Operations Plan Division (JP). From the beginning, the JP was headed by the officer who also headed SAC's war planning staff, acting in a "dual hat" capacity. "Dual Hatting," to make immediate use of SAC's built-in planning expertise, was a JSTPS feature from the beginning. In 1961, the Secretary of Defense issued a directive that prohibited "dual-hatting"--the head of the NSTL Division. At the same time he decided that key positions in the NSTL Division must be filled by the best qualified officers regardless of service affiliation, while key positions in the SIOP Division would be filled by service representatives in proportion to the forces each service provided to the SIOP. The latter provision has since been modified but, in general, these principles are still in effect.

Other milestones of the JSTPS organization were:

The assignment of NATO nations with the arrival of the first Italian Representative in late 1963. Over the years, NATO representation has included Belgium, France, Holland, in addition to the representation from the German Federal Republic, Italy, and the United Kingdom, as at present.

The Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) was established in 1968. This group consists of representatives from private industry, government, and semi-public research organizations with extensive background in science and technology. They provide the Director with up-to-date advice on scientific and technical subjects involving nuclear planning. JSTPS convenes the SAG on the average of twice a year.

On 1 July 1975, the Deputy Director became the Vice Director and both divisions were elevated to directorates. A Small Joint Secretariat (JS) was also created at this time. Throughout JSTPS history, the portions of its organization, in both JL and JP dealing with computers, or automated data processing (ADP), steadily gained in importance as increasingly larger portions of the planning processes were automated. In 1978 and 1982, branches were organized in JP for the specific purpose of cruise missile planning (all variations--Ground, Air, and Sea).

In July 1984, some JSTPS members who were dual hatted with Headquarters SAC, became, in effect, "triple hatters" when the latter headquarters and Air Force Communications Command (AFCC) realigned certain positions in the field of

information systems. Thus, a few staff members worked, at one time, for JSTPS, Headquarters SAC, and AFCC.

In October 1984, the two directorates of JSTPS underwent a major organizational realignment. This was completely overshadowed by a reorganization action initiated by the Vice Director (JV) in mid-1985. The succeeding JV carried the project forward from the study to the completion phase with the full support of two successive Directors of Strategic Planning (JDs) and it was put into effect in October 1986.

Reorganization was necessary to streamline the staff to deal with emerging guidance and strategy, with increasingly emphasized flexibility, to replan rapidly and meet adaptive planning requirements. The added flexibility must be attained within current SIOP planning cycles and manning constraints.

The most significant features of the current organization, which are depicted in Figure 2, were:

a. The emergence of a new directorate in addition to the NSTL (JC) and SIOP (now renamed Force Employment Plans Directorate but still coded JP). The new directorate was called the Analysis Concepts and Systems Directorate (JK) and incorporated from both JL and JP elements that had formerly dealt separately with these subjects. For example, this centralized responsibility for ADP support and combined certain similar functions formerly divided between JL and JP.

b. It added the services of a full time Scientific and Technical Advisor (JT), at Senior Executive Service (SES) level, to assist the JV.

c. It reorganized the Joint Secretariat to perform functions of management, services and administration.

JSTPS started with a total strength of 268 which was augmented by 82 spaces within the first two months. This, however, was a temporary arrangement designed to cope with a requirement to develop the first SIOP at a rapid pace--within a few months. Such a curtailed planning cycle as the first was a one-time occurrence. After this emergency ended, the staff's strength was cut almost 50 percent, to the 180-level which remained its normal authorized strength for the next few years.

Before the end of the 1960's, however, additional spaces were needed, requested, and approved so that the staff's 1970 level was near 300. The overall trend, since that period, has been one of increasing the size. Authorizations reached the 350 level by 1978 and have reached slightly over 400 by 1985.

Growth of JSTPS personnel strength was clearly driven by the increasing complexity of the SIOP and related weapons systems, requirements for more flexibility, more options for the NCA, and the resulting necessity to meet these demands with even more complex data automation.

Service representation has generally maintained the same proportions throughout the years, with perhaps a slight reduction

of SAC dual-hatted personnel who have comprised between 35 and 45 percent of the strength. Non-SAC Air Force personnel fill 25 to 35 percent; Navy (including marines) hold 15 to 20 percent; Army between 5 and 10 percent of the authorized spaces, while five percent or fewer have been nominated positions with no particular service specified.

With the added emphasis on Joint-Duty Billets, the JSTPS currently has 22 Army, approximately 80 Navy, and the remaining spaces filled by Air Force personnel. The issue of SAC dual-hatted personnel receiving joint service credit is unresolved as of this writing.

As could be deduced, from the nature of the staff's mission, officers outnumber enlisted personnel by almost 3 to 1, while civilians (most of them part of the SAC dual-hat/Air Force contribution) account for about five percent, mostly administrative staff, plus a few highly qualified professionals; such as the Scientific Advisor.

Figure 2 shows the current organization of the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff.

The Director of Strategic Target Planning is responsible for maintaining a Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff (JSTPS) in accordance with guidance provided by the JCS. The Vice Director (JV) acts for the director in maintaining and supervising "the targeting professionals in Omaha."

As indicated in the history of the organization, the JSTPS takes broad NCA policy and guidance and proceeds through

an input, methodology and output process. They utilize three basic models of strategic analysis: theoretical comparison, gaming and simulation, and practical estimates.

In understanding the various methods of building the SIOP, a careful examination of functional area responsibilities will be helpful.

The Deputy Director for the National Strategic Target List (TL) is charged with the responsibility to develop and maintain, on a day-to-day basis, a National Strategic Target List--targets selected for attack in a nuclear war in accordance with guidance provided by the JCS. The JL develops the National Target Base, the authoritative target installation data base which is used in generating the SIOP. In addition, the JL develops and maintains desired ground zeros (air points, or DGZs), allocation weapons committed to the SIOP and the Secure Reserve Force (SRF), and develops mathematical models to quantitatively measure enemy defensive capabilities and the threat posed to SIOP forces. The JL organization further develops attrition models to study the probability of penetration by SIOP forces. The JL also develops and maintains the appropriate intelligence collection requirements, maintains the Nuclear Weapons Reconnaissance List (NRL) and develops and maintains the appropriate SIOP Reconnaissance Plan in support of the SIOP and other contingency nuclear plans.

The Deputy Director for Force Employment Plans (JP) is charged with developing and maintaining the SIOP using committed

and coordinated forces in accordance with JCS guidance. In addition, the JP is responsible for developing and maintaining the nuclear reserve war plans and for the coordination and processing of general war plans data.

Specifically, the JP considers all planning assumptions and other guidance contained in the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP), internal JSTPS guidance, and the capabilities of committed forces, assigns specific weapons to targets identified for attack by the JL. The JP organization performs detailed mission planning functions for certain NATO coordinated weapons in accordance with priorities provided by SACEUR. Additionally, the JP conducts individual strike planning and strike integration to optimize tactics and defensive countermeasures. The JP also develops detailed launch/strike timing plans to coordinate the arrivals of and to prevent conflict among and between committed and coordinated forces (Fratricide). Finally, the JP continually reviews the SIOP, analyzes all nuclear plans, and has the mission of publishing and distributing the SIOP.

The newly created Deputy Director for Analysis, Concepts and Systems (JK) is charged by the JD with supporting the SIOP production process with analysis of nuclear weapons employment, guidance, management of technical assessments of weapons effects and planning processes; formulating and coordinating concepts, strategies and plans to improve SIOP responsiveness, survivability, adaptability, and enhancement of weapons effectiveness. The JK is also responsible for damage analysis,

constraints management, facilities estimates, war games analysis and simulating review of SIOP effectiveness and for provision of analysis support to the nuclear CINCS. Further, the JK is the single point of contact for the acquisition and management of all data automation support including definition of requirements. The JK is responsible for interface with the Strategic Weapon Systems Program Office to ensure JSTPS support and interface requirements are considered during development. In discharging this mission, the JK is responsible for the accomplishment of the functions common to all directorates.

The recently created Scientific and Technical Advisor (JT) serves as the advisor to the JV for scientific and technical support. He is responsible for analytic development, resource planning and management, and for operational continuity. The JT reviews analytical taskings, coordinates with all the directorates in evaluating capabilities for conducting analysis and ensures the adequacy and quality of the analytical products. He is the principal advisor on all scientific and technical matters relating to or affecting the mission and functional responsibilities of the JSTPS.

The directorates within the JSTPS utilize the models of strategic analysis in building the SIOP, theoretical comparison, gaming and simulation, and practical estimates. Theoretical comparisons are made to calculate static measures of effectiveness. An example would be the use of equivalent megatonnage. The complicated SIOP planning process is depicted in Figure 3.

Analyses in the gaming mode are based primarily on computer simulations. Simply put, the inputs generally include specific data on weapons and targets and broad targeting objectives from the NCA guidance. The output is normally in the form of a net assessment or a force structure recommendation.

Practical estimates rely on detailed treatment from the operational planning perspective. The mission planners try to be as "real world" as possible. In spite of the sophistication of the technology involved, the only output is an expected-outcome estimate. This mean-value detailed treatment methodology is the mathematical foundation for the SIOP and the basis for the strategic nuclear planning conducted by the JSTPS.

The expected value approach employed by the JSTPS implies that our nuclear strategy is only based upon probable outcome because all mean value inputs are only estimates. Such testing and war gaming may not reflect actual wartime conditions.

The public debate on nuclear strategy, arms control and force structure has relied heavily on theoretical comparisons heretofore mentioned. Presumably, the NCA have numerous gaming and simulation technology readily available to them. The question remains: Are the policy makers fully aware of the basic limitations that become apparent only in the practical estimate mode of strategic analysis?

The JSTPS, like any military organization, is not involved in the political decisions. The targeteers take the NCA broad policy guidance, develops the National Strategic Target List,

war games the scenarios, and then programs the entries into the appropriate Triad weapons system. The SIOP development process has been "completed."

Daily revisions and reprogramming of the data base upon receiving updated guidance, or intelligence updates, keep the JSTPS busy throughout the year. If an airman drops a wrench into a missile silo in Arkansas and disables a Titan missile, then the entire SIOP must be reprogrammed. Nuclear targeting by the JSTPS never stops.

In the years since its creation, the JSTPS has served this nation as a vital link between strategy and the operational forces. Through its mission of developing the SIOP, the staff has provided the foundation for the preeminent national strategic objective--deterrence.

Serious disagreement about war planning existed between the services when the JSTPS was formed. The JSTPS, when created, was actually a compromise worked out by Secretary of Defense Gates, the first Director, General Thomas S. Power, and the first Deputy Director, Vice Admiral Edward N. Parker, initiated a concerted cooperative effort to resolve conflicts, primarily through formalized committees and discussions. Soon early precedents and compromise combined with balanced membership and even distribution of duties to smooth out relationships.

Harmony among JSTPS members emerged at an early date and increased through the years. Parochial considerations are submerged as members strive for the ultimate benefit of the

whole nation--deterrence. As a result, the JSTPS has come to enjoy a high reputation within the DOD community for the consistently high quality of its products. One result of this was in January 1986, the staff was among the first to receive the Joint Meritorious Unit Award from the Chairman of the JCS after the creation of that award.

In the basic sense, the motto of SAC (Peace is Our Profession) also applies to the JSTPS. Deterrence of a nuclear conflict remains the primary goal of the JSTPS. To ensure that our adversaries perceive that the cost of damage that can be inflicted by executing the SIOP is not worth the risk of initiating a nuclear war continues to be the mission of the JSTPS. .

ENDNOTES

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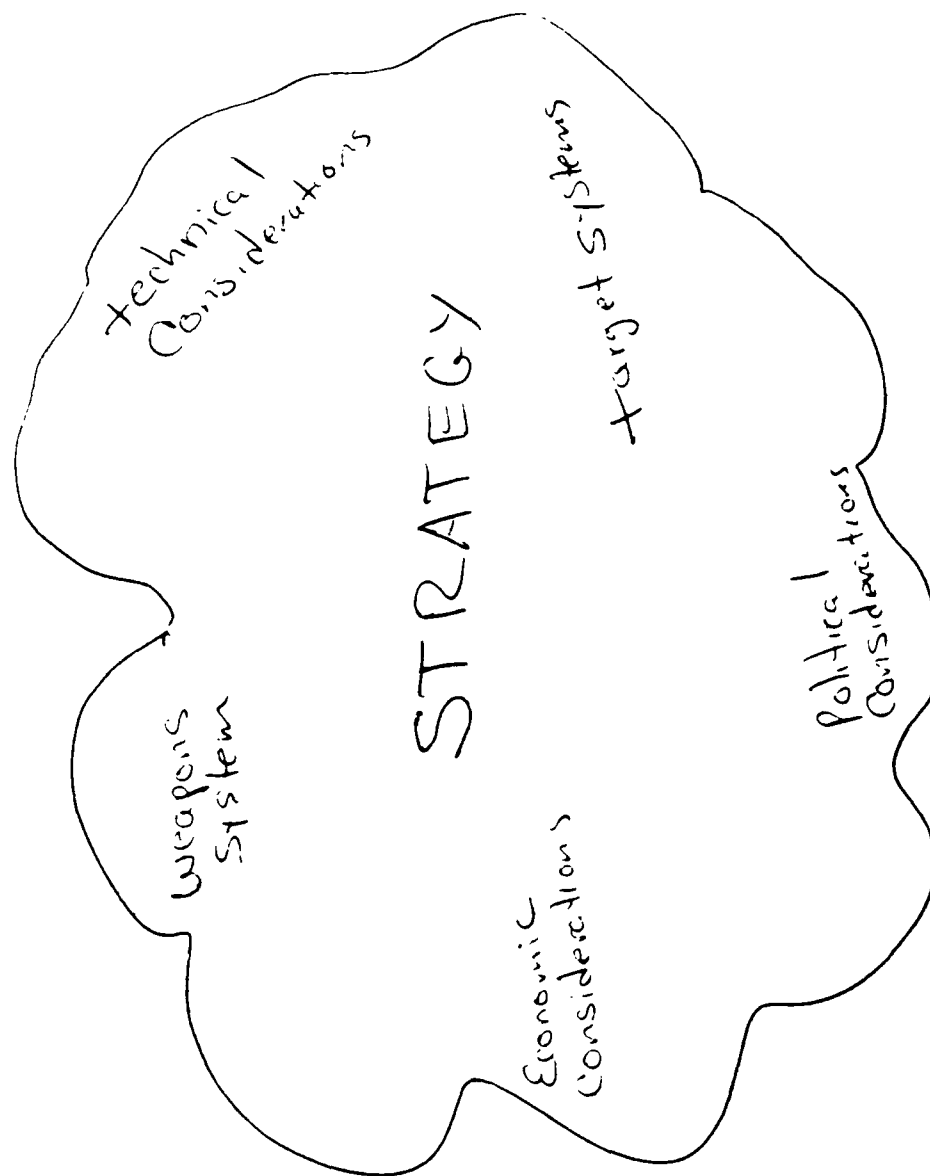
9. Ibid., p. 85.

10. The current mission statement and unclassified briefing aids were provided by the Joint Secretariat, Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff, Offutt Air Force Base, Omaha, Nebraska.

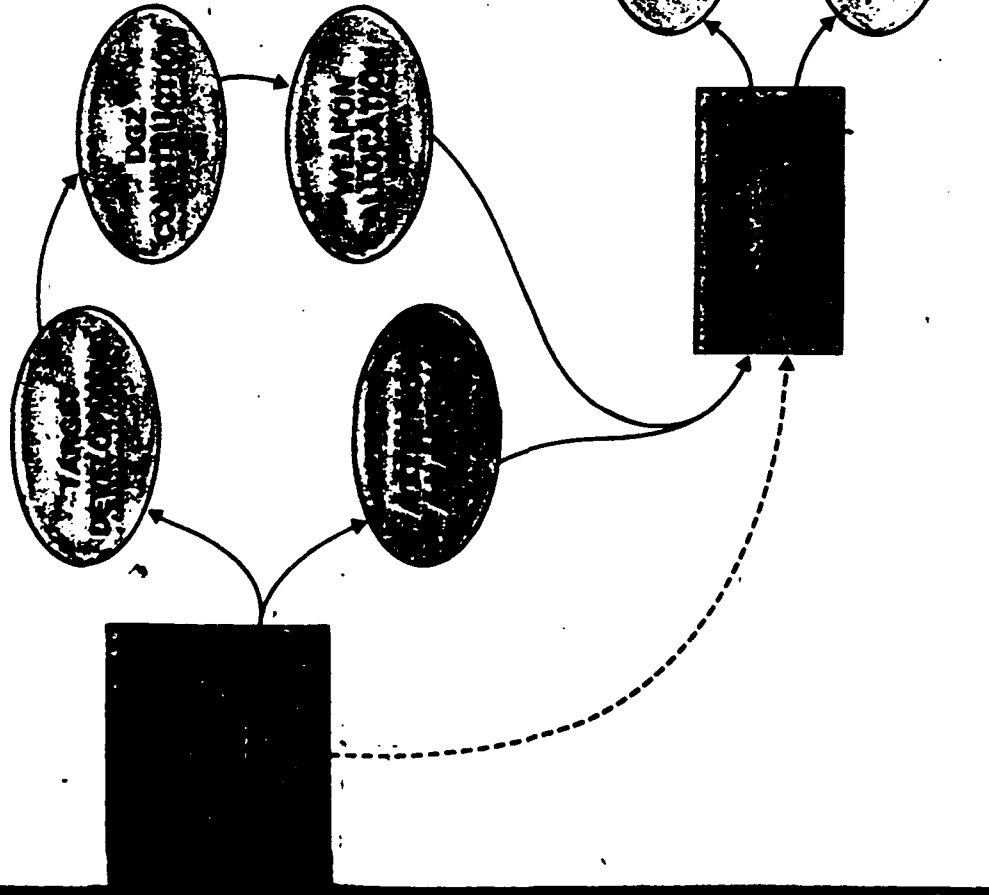
11. Slides and current JSTPS organization data provided by Col. Steve Husted, USA, Senior Army Officer, U.S. Army Element, Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff, Offutt Air Force Base, Omaha, Nebraska.

12. JSTPS current manning document.

Fig 1



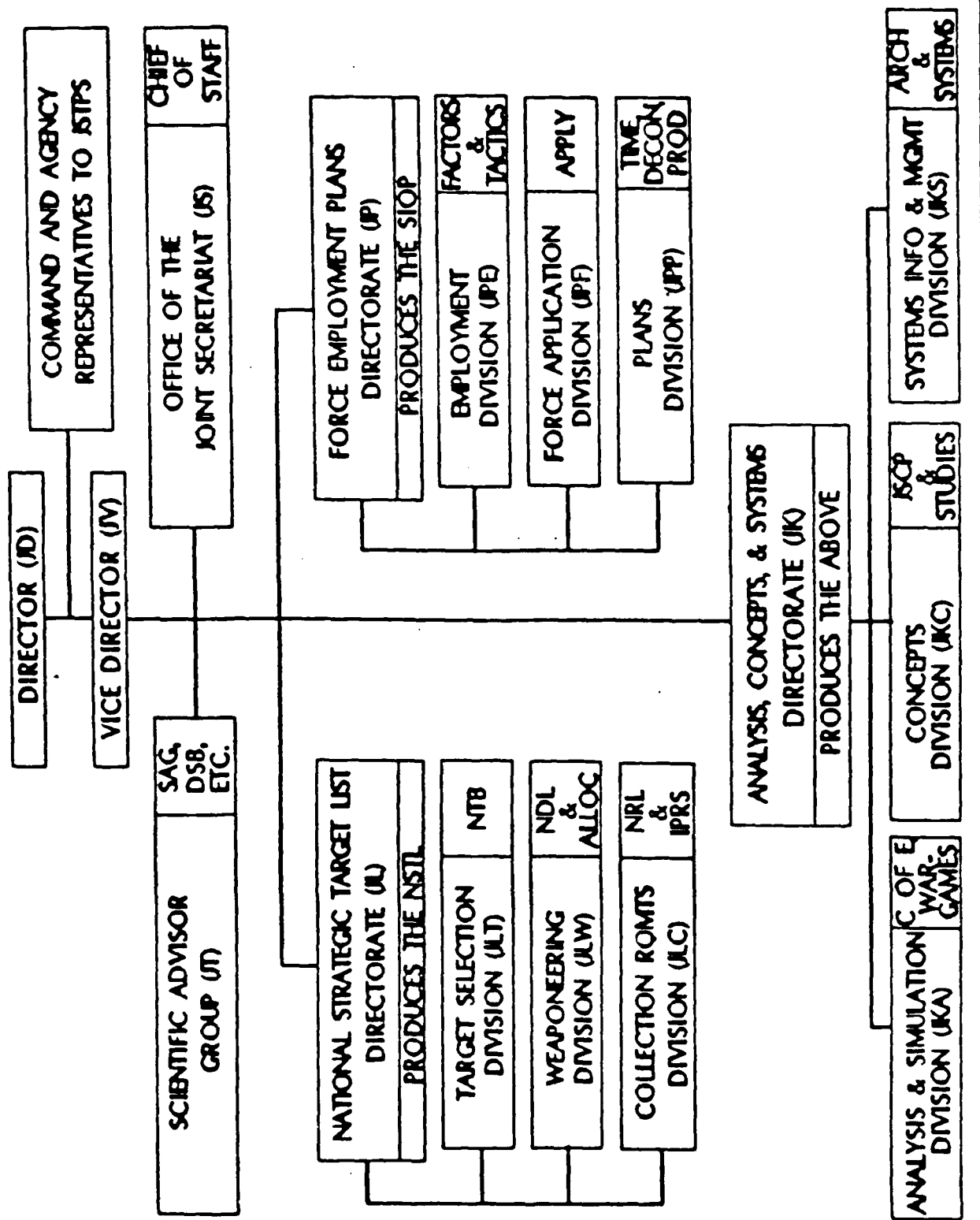
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